

CCDLA
"Ready in the Defense of Liberty"
Founded 1988

**Connecticut Criminal Defense
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S.B. 965
**AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF AN IGNITION INTERLOCK
DEVICE UPON A FIRST DRUNKEN DRIVING CONVICTION.**
MARCH 18, 2011

**TESTIMONY OF JAMES O. RUANE, EXECUTIVE BOARD
MEMBER AT LARGE, OF THE CONNECTICUT CRIMINAL
DEFENSE LAWYERS ASSOCIATION IN SUPPORT OF S.B. 965**

Chairman Coleman, Chairman Fox, and Distinguished Members of the Judiciary Committee:

The Connecticut Criminal Defense Lawyers Association (CCDLA) is a statewide organization of approximately 350 licensed lawyers, in both public and private sectors, dedicated to defending persons accused of criminal offenses. Founded in 1988, CCDLA works to improve the criminal justice system by ensuring that the individual rights guaranteed by the Connecticut and United States constitutions are applied fairly and equally and that those rights are not abridged.

CCDLA SUPPORTS BILL NO. 965

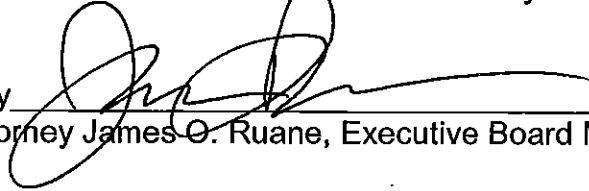
CCDLA is firmly committed to creating a judicial system which effectively addresses the needs of society in curbing drunk driving in Connecticut. As criminal defense attorneys, we see firsthand the deleterious effects on the family of the offender when they are without a driver's license for a year upon a first conviction for DUI. The loss of license affects more than just the offender. Families lose their house, offenders lose their jobs and children suffer when their parents are unable to drive, which often causes them to lose their employment and probably the means to support their children with life's necessities and healthcare coverage. By allowing a shorter period of a "hard" suspension of 90 days, the message of "don't drink and drive" is sent to the offender, but you allow the offender to likely maintain their employment, drive themselves to substances abuse treatment programs and groups like AA, and give them an incentive to maintain sobriety, all while serving a daily reminder not to drink and drive by the presence of the ignition interlock in the automobile. This bill is good for our state,

good for the safety of the driver's on the road and good for the court, as it allows a bargaining tool in the resolution of cases. This factor alone may reduce the costs associated with the trials of DUI offenders who contest their guilt merely to attempt to save their driver's license.

Thus, for these reasons we respectfully urge this Honorable Committee, the General Assembly and Governor Malloy to enact Governor's Bill No. 6391.

Thank you.

The Connecticut Criminal Defense Lawyers Association,

By 
Attorney James O. Ruane, Executive Board Member at Large